

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2006

The Hon. Ralph Regula, Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. David R. Obey, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We urge you to support \$53 million for the Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education in the Fiscal Year 2007 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill. The Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education funds model arts education programs in schools in communities throughout the country, the professional development of arts educators, and the ongoing national arts education initiatives of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and *VSA arts*, a program which ensures that people with disabilities can participate in the arts. Years of research demonstrates that a significant link exists between arts education and students' academic performance, as well as their social development, motivations, attitudes, and disposition toward learning.

Though the Department of Education has not requested specific funding for the Arts in Education program, over the past five years Congress has approved incremental funding increases. These have resulted in 122 awards to school districts in over 145 Congressional Districts throughout the country. Model programs supported by the Department are showing impressive results. A recent analysis of U.S. Department of Education data on 25,000 middle and high school students found that students who were highly involved in the arts performed better on a variety of academic measures than other students.


Students who take regular arts courses are shown to score on average 90 to 100 points better on their SATs. They are shown to have better attendance at school, earn better grades, have lower drop-out rates, perform more community service, watch fewer hours of television, and have higher self-esteem. At-risk teens who participate in arts programs are half as likely to repeat their crimes.

As you know, No Child Left Behind recognizes the arts as a core subject of learning. This commitment to quality arts education is reinforced at the state level, where all fifty states have adopted standards in the arts or require their school districts to do so. As the states work to implement NCLB, we must provide funding to sustain the national development and dissemination of promising practices through the Arts in Education program. We must also show that a strong commitment to arts education reinforces student achievement in reading and math.

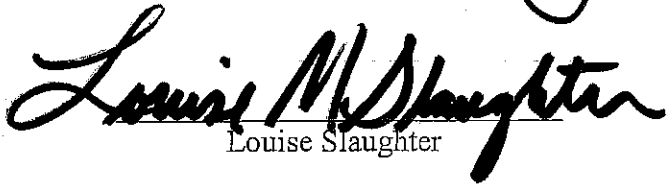
Our states, schools, and communities are poised to further strengthen arts education, but they need our help. We urge you to support the educational development of our schoolchildren and the professional development of our teachers by including \$53 million in funding for the Arts in Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

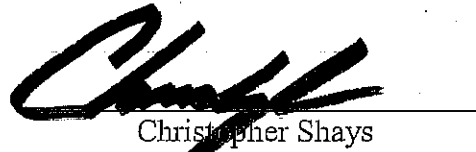
Sincerely,

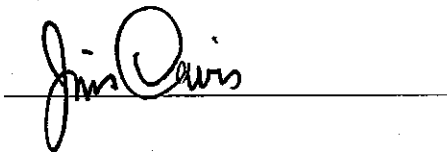

Jerrold Nadler


James Leach


Sherwood Boehlert

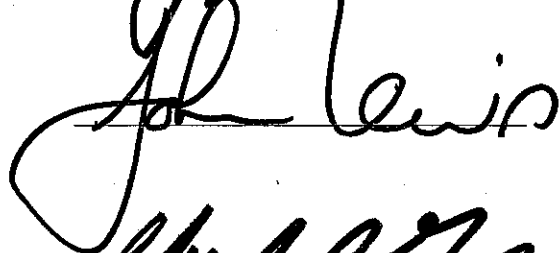

Louise Slaughter

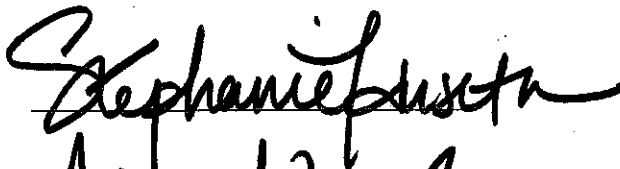

Christopher Shays


Jim Davis

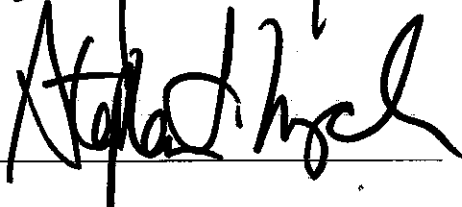

Jeff Miller



Mike Doyle


John Lewis


Stephanie Fuster

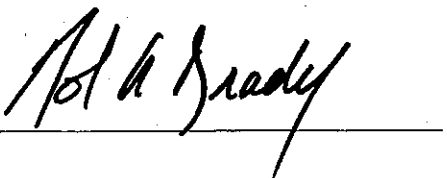

Charles Stenholm

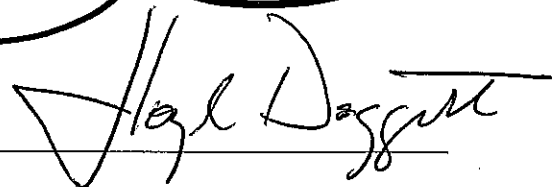

Al Swift


Harold Ford


Mike Rove


Dan Rosten


Al H. Grady


Hazel Dargatzis

Pat Stark

Al Smith

John A. LeBund

Tim Ryan

Rob Sammons

Robert Wyle

Jim Langeron

Rick Larsen

Candyn McCarthy

Jim Thmstad

Mark Foley

Joe Loff

Wm. Lacy Clay

Alvin E. Watson

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

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Sandy Pave

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Rust Holt

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Emil

Wilibald

Paul

Alwin

Walt

Signatories of the FY07 Arts in Education Appropriations letter:

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Ackerman	Green, Gene	Norton
Allen	Grijalva	Oberstar
Baldwin	Gutierrez	Owens
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Berkley	Hinchey	Pascrell
Berman	Holden	Payne
Blumenauer	Holt	Peterson, Collin
Boehlert	Honda	Platts
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Capps	Johnson, Nancy	Ross
Capuano	Johnson, Tim	Ruppersberger
Cardin	Kucinich	Rush
Case	Langevin	Ryan, Tim
Chandler	Lantos	Sanders
Christensen	Larsen	Saxton
Clay	Larson	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Leach	Shays
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Davis, Susan	Maloney	Stark
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Emanuel	McCotter	Wasserman Schultz
Engel	McDermott	Waters
English	McGovern	Watson
Etheridge	Meek	Watt
Fattah	Michaud	Waxman
Ferguson	Millender-McDonald	Weiner
Filner	Miller, Brad	Wexler
Foley	Miller, George	Woolsey
Ford	Moore, Dennis	Wu
Frank	Moore, Gwen	
Gonzalez	Moran	